

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

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FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4006

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, KE

SUBJECT: KENYAN POLITICS: BACK TO NORMAL AMID

SIGNS OF STRENGTHENED PARTY ROLE

REF: NAIROBI 4871, 4564, 4336

1. IN THE MONTH SINCE THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTED THE SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT ON THE MARCH 2 MURDER OF J.M. KARIUKI, THE KENYAN POLITICAL SCENE HAS RETURNED TO NEAR NORMAL. THE ASSEMBLY HAS RESUMED ITS TRADITIONAL ROLE AS A FORUM FOR LOCAL GRIEVANCES. KENYATTA'S UNPRECEDENTED ACTION IN ABRUPTLY DISMISSING THREE MEMBERS OF GOK WHO VOTED AGAINST A GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED MOTION ON THE KARIUKI REPORT HAS COWED HIS OPPONENTS IN PARLIAMENT, MOST OF WHOM ARE NOW ADOPTING VERY LOW PROFILE. WITH PREMIUM ON LOYALTY TO KENYATTA AND RUMORS CIRCULATING OF MOVES TO TIGHTEN UP PARTY DISCIPLINE, OVERT CRITICISM IN PARLIAMENT HAS ALL BUT DIAPPEARED. TO REPLACE THOSE HE FIRED, KENYATTA HAS APPOINTED POLITICAL NONENTITIES WHO OWE THEIR POSITION--AND THEREFORE

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FORE THEIR LOYALTY--TO THE PRESIDENT: MUNOKO AS

MINISTER FOR WORKS, OLE NAMPASO AS ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR WORKS AND ODUYA OPRUNG AS ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR LABOR. KASSIM MWAMZANDI, WHO WAS ACTIVE IN THE RECENT NATIONWIDE LOYALTY CAMPAIGN, WAS REWARDED BY BEING APPOINTED TO VACANT POST OF ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

2. IN OTHER PARLIAMENTARY DEVELOPMENTS, THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON CORRUPTION (CHAINED BY ANTI-GOK POPULIST MARTIN SHIKUKU) WAS DISBANDED BY HURRIED VOTE WITH FEW MPS PRESENT WHILE MARK MWITHAGA, POLITICAL ALLY OF KARIUKI AND FREQUENT CRITIC OF GOK, WAS UNSEATED BY THE COURTS FOR ALLEGED ELECTION IRREGULARITIES. WILLIAM OMAMO, FORMER MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES WHO WAS DEFEATED IN OCTOBER '74 ELECTIONS, WAS NOMINATED BY PRESIDENT TO ASSEMBLY, WHERE HE JOINS EX-FOREIGN MINISTER MUNGAI, NOMINATED LAST MONTH.

3. NAIROBI UNIVERSITY, THE OTHER CENTER OF ORGANIZED ANTI-GOK SENTIMENT AND SCENE OF SERIOUS DISTURBANCES ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS IN RECENT MONTHS, IS AGAIN OPEN AND OPERATING NORMALLY. STUDENTS, TOO, APPEAR COWED BY PUNITIVE POLICE ACTION AND MASS ARRESTS IN MAY.

4. WHILE RELATIVE POSITION OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY HAS DECLINED, THERE ARE INDICATIONS KENYATTA MAY BE PLANNING BIGGER ROLE FOR KENYA AFRICAN NATIONAL UNION (KANU), KENYA'S NEAR-MORIBUND SINGLE PARTY. ON JULY 12 KENYATTA, AS HEAD OF KANU, CONVENED FIRST MEETING OF PARTY OFFICIALS IN MORE THAN A YEAR. ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS, MEETING FOCUSED ON RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARTY AND GOVERNMENT AND STEPS TO BE TAKEN TO REORGANIZE AND REVITALIZE KANU. KANU OFFICIALS, IN JULY 14 DISCUSSION WITH EMBOFF, SAID KENYATTA DETERMINED TO STRENGTHEN PARTY AND HAS GIVEN GREEN LIGHT TO KANU OFFICIALS TO INITIATE INTENSIVE RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN AND ORGANIZE LOCAL BRANCHES WITH VIEW TOWARD EVENTUALLY HOLDING ELECTIONS FOR NATIONAL OFFICIALS. THEY STRESSED, HOWEVER, THAT REORGANIZATION, WHICH WOULD START AT VILLAGE LEVEL, WOULD REQUIRE MANY MONTHS FOR COMPLETION. THEY DID NOT FORESEE ELECTIONS

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FOR NATIONAL OFFICIALS BEFORE 1976.

5. COMMENT: IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN IF KENYATTA IS IN FACT PREPARED TO ACCEPT A MORE ACTIVE ROLE FOR THE PARTY. HE CLEARLY WASN'T IN 1971/72, WITH THE RESULT THAT THE THEN BALLYHOOED REORGANIZATION AND ELECTIONS NEVER CAME OFF. THIS TIME HE MAY MERELY BE FOCUSING ATTENTION ON KANU AS A USEFUL DIVERSION FROM THE KARIUKI AFFAIR WITHOUT EVER

INTENDING TO REVITALIZE THE PARTY. HE MAY, ON THE OTHER  
HAND, ALSO WANT STRONGER PARTY DISCIPLINE AS AN ADDITIONAL  
WEAPON AGAINST HIS WOULD-BE CRITICS.  
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